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CORRESPONDENCE.

VENICE: THE 'MAIDEN CITY.'

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—It has already been pointed out by a correspondent in the *Nation* for August 25th that Coryat can hardly have supposed himself to be doing anything original, as Professor Mead suggests (*M. L. N.*, xxv, 174 ff.), in applying the term "maiden city" to Venice. As to Wordsworth's acquaintance with the phrase, he might have found it used, insisted upon, and twisted into all the conceits it would bear in a book considerably more popular and better known than Coryat's. In sixteen pages of Howell's *Familiar Letters* Venice is six times described as the "maiden city" or "virgin city" in as many separate letters dated from Venice between April 30 and August 12, 1621 (pp. 62, 63, 68, 73, 75, 78 of Joseph Jacobs' reprint of the 1737 edition). In one of these, address to his "Dear Dick" Altham of Gray's Inn, Howell rings the changes upon the conceit as follows:

"I have now a good while since taken footing in *Venice*, this admired Maiden-City, so call'd, because she was never defloured by any Enemy since she had a Being, not since her *Rialto* was first erected, which is now above twelve Ages ago.

"I protest to you, at my first landing I was for some days ravished with the high Beauty of this Maid, with her lovely Countenance. I admired her magnificent Buildings, her marvellous Situation, her dainty smooth new Streets, whereon you may walk most days in the year in a Silk Stockin and Sattin-Slippers, without soiling them; nor can the Streets of *Paris* be so foul as these are fair. This beauteous Maid hath been often attempted to be vitiated; some have courted her, some bribed her, some would have forc'd her, yet she hath still preserv'd her Chastity entire: and tho' she hath lived so many Ages, and passed so many shrewd brunts, yet she continueth fresh to this very day without the least Wrinkle of old Age, or any symptoms of Decay, whereunto political Bodies, as well as natural, use to be liable. Beside, she hath wrestled with the greatest Potentates upon Earth; the Emperor, the King of *France*, and most of the other Princes of Christendom, in that famous League of *Cambray*, would have sunk her; but she bore up still within her Lakes, and broke that League to pieces with her Wit; The Grand *Turk* hath been often at her, and tho' he could not have his will of her, yet he took away the richest Jewel she wore in her *Coronet*, and put it in his *Turban*; I mean the Kingdom of *Cyprus*, the only Royal Gem she

had; he hath set upon her Skirts often since, and tho' she clos'd with him sometimes, yet she came off still with her Maidenhead; tho' some that envy her happiness would brand her to be of late times a kind of *Concubine* to him, and that she gives him ready Money once a year to lie with her, which she minceth by the name of *Present*, tho' it be indeed rather a *Tribute*."

H. M. BELDEN.

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THE EYES AS GENERATORS OF LOVE.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—In volume x of *Kritischer Jahresbericht über die Fortschritte der Romanischen Philologie* (herausg. Juli 1910), II, p. 6, Mr. A. Hilka expresses himself as follows with reference to my letter on the above-mentioned subject printed in *Mod. Lang. Notes*, 1908, pp. 126–127: "Zu den *Augen als Liebeszeugern* ergreift auch H. R. Lang das Wort, um zur Ergänzung von *MLN.*, 1907, S. 232 für dies ungemein häufige dichterische Motiv Beispiele aus dem Klassischen Altertum—wobei er es aber unterlässt auf die förmliche Technik bei den griechischen Romanschriftstellern (vgl. E. Rhode, griech. Roman) und deren Nachahmern einzugehen—und aus englischen Dichtungen vor Shakespeare, so aus Gowers *Confessio Amantis* nebst Balladen und aus Chaucers *Romaunt de la Rose* beizubringen." Now, any careful reader of my letter will see that it was not, as is here assumed, written with the object of adding a few more to the many familiar examples of this theme, but explicitly for the purpose of correcting the theory of its itinerary among medieval authors laid down in the passage I cited from a communication published in the *Mod. Lang. Notes* a few months before. And this being my only purpose, I adduced only such evidence from classical antiquity and from pre-Shakespearean poets as bore directly upon the point in question, the very universality of the theme rendering it unnecessary to do more.

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A NOTE ON WARD'S *History of English Dramatic Literature*.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—An interesting example of an error caused through carelessness in re-wording another man's summary may be found in Ward's account of the morality play *Mankind* (*History of English Dramatic Literature*, 2d ed., Vol. I, p. 116).